IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,)	CIVIL ACTION NO.
Plaintiff,)	JUDGE
v.)	
\$15,439.00 IN U.S. CURRENCY, and)	COMPLAINT IN EQUEETIBE
\$5,010.00 IN U.S. CURRENCY,)	COMPLAINT IN FORFEITURE
Defendants.)	

NOW COMES plaintiff, the United States of America, by Justin E. Herdman, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, and Phillip J. Tripi, Assistant U.S. Attorney, and files this Complaint in Forfeiture, alleging on information and belief the following:

JURISDICTION AND INTRODUCTION

- 1. This Court has jurisdiction over this <u>in rem</u> proceeding pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1345 and 1355, and 21 U.S.C. § 881.
 - 2. This Court has venue in this matter pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1395.
- 3. The defendants \$15,439.00 in U.S. Currency and \$5,010.00 in U.S. Currency (hereinafter "defendant currencies") were seized on December 1, 2017. The defendant currencies are now in the possession of the federal government.
- 4. Subsequent to the seizure, the Drug Enforcement Administration (hereinafter "DEA") commenced administrative forfeiture proceedings against the defendant currencies. A

claim to the defendant currencies was submitted in the administrative forfeiture proceeding by Keith Green (hereinafter "Green"), necessitating the filing of this judicial forfeiture action.

5. The defendant currencies are subject to forfeiture to the United States pursuant to 21 U.S.C. § 881(a)(6), because they constitute proceeds traceable to drug trafficking activities and/or were used or intended to be used to facilitate drug trafficking in violation of 21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a) and/or 846.

FORFEITURE COUNT

- 6. On Friday, December 1, 2017, members of the DEA, Cleveland District Office, Group 2, received information regarding the suspicious travel itineraries of Green and James T. Rock (hereinafter "Rock"). They were both scheduled to depart Cleveland, Ohio, on December 1, 2017, on an American Airlines flight to Sacramento, California, with one-way tickets purchased the previous day.
- 7. DEA became aware that Green had an extensive criminal and drug-related history.
- 8. On December 1, 2017, at approximately 2:40 p.m., Green and Amanda T. Miles (hereinafter Miles) approached the American Airlines counter at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport.
- 9. They exited the terminal shortly thereafter and walked back to a dark blue Jeep rental vehicle located on the departing flights lanes in front of the airport terminal.
 - 10. Rock was seated in the front passenger seat of the Jeep.
- 11. Miles entered the rear passenger side of the Jeep and handed a black nylon brief case to Rock from the rear passenger seat.

- 12. Rock was observed with the black nylon brief case walking towards and entering the airport terminal with Green, who possessed a small black shaving bag.
- 13. At approximately 2:57 p.m., a DEA agent and a Task Force Officer (hereinafter "TFO") approached Green and Rock inside the terminal to conduct a consensual encounter.
 - 14. Green and Rock consented to speak to the DEA.
 - 15. Green and Rock each claimed to be travelling to California on a business trip.
- 16. Rock stated they had not booked a return flight because they were uncertain of the length of their business trip.
- 17. When asked whether they were in possession of any weapons, drugs, or bulk currency, they each stated, "No."
 - 18. Both consented to the search of their bags.
- 19. The TFO opened the shaving bag that Green had in his possession, and located several stacks of federal reserve notes, later determined to be defendant \$15,439.00 in U.S. Currency, some of which currency was contained inside a leather wallet found inside of the shaving bag.
- 20. When asked why he had not divulged he was carrying the currency, Green initially made no reply.
- 21. When asked why the currency was in several bundles, Green stated, "So TSA doesn't mess with me."
- 22. When asked why he was carrying the currency on the flight, Green stated he was travelling to California to make a payment on a cabin.
 - 23. When questioned by the TFO about the odor of raw marijuana and the small

particles of vegetation inside the shaving bag, Green stated he smokes marijuana and that was indeed marijuana that the TFO smelled coming from the bag.

- 24. At the same time, the DEA agent separately spoke to Rock, who stated he was carrying the nylon brief case for Green.
- 25. Rock told the agent that he and Green planned to be in California until the following Tuesday.
- 26. Rock acknowledged that neither he nor Green had checked any other bags with the airline.
- 27. The agent opened Rock's brief case and located several stacks of Federal Reserve Notes inside a smaller nylon lunch bag, later determined to be defendant \$5,010.00 in U.S. Currency.
- 28. Rock stated the currency belonged to Green and that he was carrying the black nylon bag for Green.
- 29. Green estimated the total amount of cash was carrying to be approximately \$25,000.00.
- 30. Green stated he owned a construction business and that he intended to use the cash to repair a cracked foundation of a building he owned in California.
- 31. When advised that DEA would be seizing the currency, Green presented a business card in the name of "Master Craft Exterior Finishing" and claimed to have a legitimate construction business.
- 32. The DEA seized the defendant currencies and Green refused to sign the evidence bag forms for the defendant currencies.

- 33. Green again stated that he had a valid tax ID number and owned a construction business.
- 34. Green then stated that nine lumberjacks' families would "go hungry" this weekend because the money was to be used to pay them for work that had been performed for Green in California.
- 35. Green declined to answer questions about his criminal history and drug involvement, stating, "You guys can find that out yourselves."
- 36. The encounter ended before boarding was complete for their scheduled flight, and Green and Rock were advised they were free to travel, but they chose not to travel on their scheduled flight.
- 37. A certified canine officer and his canine, "Kilo," conducted a blind test at the airport, during which the canine made positive alerts for the odor of narcotics on separate boxes containing each of the defendant currencies.
- 38. State of Ohio records reveal that Green's business name, Master Craft Exterior Finishing, had been cancelled since April 6, 2015, for failure to renew his registration of that name.
- 39. Green has a drug-related criminal history which includes multiple arrests and the following conviction: Conspiracy to Traffick in Marijuana, on August 23, 2012, in Case No. 12-CR-192, Ashtabula County Court of Common Pleas.
- 40. By reason of the foregoing, the defendant currencies are subject to forfeiture to the United States pursuant to the statutory authority set forth in paragraph 5 hereof.

WHEREFORE, plaintiff prays that this Court enter judgment condemning the defendant currencies and forfeiting them to the United States of America for disposition according to law and for such other relief as this Court may deem just and proper.

Respectfully submitted,

JUSTIN E. HERDMAN United States Attorney

By:

Phillip J. Tripi / Reg. No. 0017767

United States Court House

801 West Superior Avenue, Suite 400

Cleveland, OH 44113

Phone: (216) 622-3769 Fax: (216)522-7499

Phillip.Tripi@usdoj.gov

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VERIFICATION	VER	IFIC	ATI	ON
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STATE OF OHIO)	
)	SS
COUNTY OF CUYAHOGA)	

I, Phillip J. Tripi, being first duly sworn, depose and say that I am an Assistant United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, and one of the attorneys for the Plaintiff in this action. Under penalty of perjury I depose and say the foregoing Complaint in Forfeiture is based upon information officially provided to me and is true as I verily believe.

Phillip J. Tripi

Assistant U.S. Attorney

Sworn to and subscribed in my presence this <u>29</u> day of November, 2018.

Notary Public

ARIAL SCHOOL STATE OF ONLINE

DIANE SCHNEIDER
NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF OHIO
COMM. EXPIRES
3-9-2022
RECORDED IN
CUYAHOGA COUNTY

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JS 44 (Rev. 11/15)

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet.

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS United States of America	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	HONS ON NEXT PAGE C	THIS FO	DEFENDANT \$15,439.00 in U.	ΓS .S. Currenc	y, and \$5,010.	.00 in U.S. Cı	urrency	
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, A Phillip J. Tripi, Assistant 1801 West Superior Avenu (216) 622-3769	CEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CA Address, and Telephone Numbe U.S. Attorney	")	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	County of Residen NOTE: IN LAND THE TRA Attorneys (If Know	(IN U.S. CONDEMNAT CT OF LAND	PLAINTIFF CASES			
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¥ 1 U.S. Government	☐ 3 Federal Question			(For Diversity Cases Only	PTF DEF		and One Box j	or Defende PTF	ant) DEF
Plaintiff	(U.S. Government I	Not a Party)	Citize	en of This State	01 01	Incorporated or P of Business In		□ 4	1 4
☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant	☐ 4 Diversity (Indicate Citizensh	ip of Parties in Item III)	Citize	en of Another State		2 Incorporated and of Business In	Principal Place Another State	5	5
				en or Subject of a reign Country	3 3 3	3 Foreign Nation		□ 6	1 6
IV. NATURE OF SUIT		ly) RTS	FC	ORFEITURE/PENALTY	Y BA	NKRUPTCY	OTHER	STATUT	ES
□ 110 Insurance □ 120 Marine □ 130 Miller Act □ 140 Negotiable Instrument □ 150 Recovery of Overpayment	PERSONAL INJURY 310 Airplane 315 Airplane Product Liability 320 Assault, Libel & Slander 330 Federal Employers' Liability 340 Marine 345 Marine Product Liability 350 Motor Vehicle 750 Motor Vehicle 760 Total Liability 360 Other Personal Injury Medical Malpractice CIVIL RIGHTS 440 Other Civil Rights 441 Voting 442 Employment 443 Housing/ Accommodations 445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Employment 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other 448 Education	PERSONAL INJUR 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability Product Liability Pharmaceutical Personal Injury Product Liability Product Liability 368 Asbestos Persona Injury Product Liability PERSONAL PROPEI 370 Other Fraud 371 Truth in Lending 380 Other Personal Property Damage Product Liability PRISONER PETITIO Habeas Corpus: 463 Alien Detainee 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence 530 General	Y	5 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 88 0 Other LABOR 0 Fair Labor Standards Act 0 Labor/Management Relations 0 Railway Labor Act 1 Family and Medical Leave Act 0 Other Labor Litigation 1 Employee Retirement Income Security Act IMMIGRATION 2 Naturalization Applicates 5 Other Immigration Actions	422 App 423 Wif 28 PROPI 820 Cop 830 Pat 840 Tra 861 HI/ 862 Bla 865 RS 865 RS FEDEI 870 Tax or 1 871 IRS 26	peal 28 USC 158 thdrawal USC 157 ERTY RIGHTS oyrights ent demark L SECURITY A (1395ff) ck Lung (923) WC/DIWW (405(g)) D Title XVI	375 False C 376 Qui Ta 3729(a 400 State R 410 Antile 430 Banks 450 Comm 460 Deport Corrup 480 Consur 490 Cable/ 850 Securif Excha 890 Other S 891 Agricu 893 Enviro 895 Freedo A Cac 896 Arbitra 899 Admin Act/Re	Claims Act m (31 US(a)) leapportion ist and Bankinerce ation eer Influer t Organiza mer Credit Sat TV ies/Comm nge Statutory Alltural Acts mental through the control of t	nament ng need and tions odities/ actions latters mation
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VI. CAUSE OF ACTIO	N Brief description of ca	tute under which you a use: ction pursuant to 2				uversuy):			
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:		IS A CLASS ACTION		EMAND \$		CHECK YES only JURY DEMAND		complai	nt:
VIII. RELATED CASE IF ANY	(See instructions):	JUDGE			DOCK	ET NUMBER _			
DATE 12/03/2018	62	SIGNATURE OF AT	ORNEY	F RECORD					
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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

l. :	Civil Categories: (Please check one category only).
	1. ✓ General Civil
	2. Administrative Review/Social Security
	3. Habeas Corpus Death Penalty
	*If under Title 28, §2255, name the SENTENCING JUDGE:
	CASE NUMBER:
II.	RELATED OR REFILED CASES. See LR 3.1 which provides in pertinent part: "If an action is filed or removed to this Cour and assigned to a District Judge after which it is discontinued, dismissed or remanded to a State court, and subsequently refiled, it shall be assigned to the same Judge who received the initial case assignment without regardfo the place of holding court in which the case was refiled. Counsel or a party without counsel shall be responsible for bringing such cases to the attention of the Court by responding to the questions included on the Civil Cover Sheet."
	This action is RELATED to another PENDING civil case. This action is REFILED pursuant to LR 3.1.
f app	licable, please indicate on page 1 in section VIII, the name of the Judge and case number.
II.	In accordance with Local Civil Rule 3.8, actions involving counties in the Eastern Division shall be filed at any of the divisional offices therein. Actions involving counties in the Western Division shall be filed at the Toledo office. For the purpose of determining the proper division, and for statistical reasons, the following information is requested.
	ANSWER ONE PARAGRAPH ONLY. ANSWER PARAGRAPHS 1 THRU 3 IN ORDER. UPON FINDING WHICH PARAGRAPH APPLIES TO YOUR CASE, ANSWER IT AND STOP.
	(1) Resident defendant. If the defendant resides in a county within this district, please set forth the name of such county County: Cuyahoga
	Corporation For the purpose of answering the above, a corporation is deemed to be a resident of that county in which it has its principal place of business in that district.
	(2) <u>Non-Resident defendant</u> . If no defendant is a resident of a county in this district, please set forth the coun wherein the cause of action arose or the event complained of occurred. <u>COUNTY:</u>
	(3) Other Cases. If no defendant is a resident of this district, or if the defendant is a corporation not having a principle place of business within the district, and the cause of action arose or the event complained of occurred outside this district, please set forth the county of the plaintiff's residence. COUNTY:
V.	The Counties in the Northern District of Ohio are divided into divisions as shown below. After the county is determined in Section III, please check the appropriate division.
	EASTERN DIVISION
	AKRON (Counties: Carroll, Holmes, Portage, Stark, Summit, Tuscarawas and Wayne) CLEVELAND (Counties: Ashland, Ashtabula, Crawford, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina and Richland)
	YOUNGSTOWN (Counties: Columbiana, Mahoning and Trumbull)
	WESTERN DIVISION
	TOLEDO (Counties: Allen, Auglaize, Defiance, Erie, Fulton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Huron, Lucas, Marion, Mercer, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca VanWert, Williams, Wood and Wyandot)

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED S	STATES	OF	AMERICA,)	CIVIL	ACTION	NO.
)			
		P.	laintiff,)	JUDGE		
	v.)			
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\$5,010.0	00 in t	J.S	. Currency)			
		2000)			
		De	efendant.)	PRAECI	[PE	

Please issue a Warrant of Arrest in Rem to the U.S.

Marshals Service on behalf of the United States Attorney's

Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin E. Herdman United States Attorney

By:

Phillip J. Tripi

Assistant U.S. Attorney

Reg. No. 0017767

400 United States Court House

801 West Superior Avenue

Cleveland, Ohio 44113

(216) 622-3769

Fax: (216) 522-7499

Phillip.tripi@usdoj.gov

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United States District Court

TO:

ENFORCEMENT OFFICER:

NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

THE UNITED STATES MARSHAL AND/OR ANY OTHER DULY AUTHORIZED LAW

WARRANT OF ARREST IN REM

WHEREAS, of was filed in this Court States, against:	on <u>December 3, 2018</u> a _ by Justin E. Herdman, United	Complaint d States Attorney for this	in Forfeiture District, on behalf of the United
\$15,439.00 in U.	S. Currency, CATS Asset ID:	18-DEA-636846	
\$5,010.00 in U.S	. Currency, CATS Asset ID:	18-DEA-636847	
and WHEREA States; and,	AS, the defendant property is co	urrently in the possession	, custody or control of the United
			y or Maritime Claims and Asset n rem for the arrest of the defendant
	vides that the warrant of arre		or Maritime Claims and Asset red to a person or organization
custodian in whose po be appropriate to prote		ne property is presently for tody until further order of	
WITNESS THE HONORABLE		UNITED STATES DIS	FRICT JUDGE AT
DATE	CLERK (BY) DEPUTY CLERK		
	Returnable6	days after issue	
	UNITED STATES	S MARSHALS SERVIO	CE -
DISTRICT		DATE RECEIVED	DATE EXECUTED
U.S. MARSHAL			

U.S. Department of Justice

United States Marshals Service

PROCESS RECEIPT AND RETURN

See "Instructions for Service of Process by U.S. Marshal"

SERVE AT NAME OF INDIVIDUAL, COMPANY, CORPORATION ETC. TO SERVE OR DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY TO SEIZE OR CONDEMN \$15,439.00 IN U.S. CURRENCY, and \$5,010.00 in U.S. Currency ADDRESS (Street or RFD. Apartment No., City, State and ZIP Code) SEND NOTICE OF SERVICE COPY TO REQUESTER AT NAME AND ADDRESS BELOW	PLAINTIFF							COURT CASE NUM	BER		
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Phillip J. Tripi, Assistant United States Attorney Office of the United States Attorney Office of the United States Courthouse Cleveland, Ohio 44113 SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR OTHER INFORMATION THAT WILL ASSIST IN EXPEDITING SERVICE (Include Business and Alternate Addresses. All Telephone Numbers, and Estimated Times Available for Service): SIgnature of Antonicy other Originator reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator Reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator Reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator Reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other Originator Reportsting service on behalf of: Signature of Antonicy other National Antonic Reportsting Service Originator of Service Signature of Authorized USMS Deputy or Clerk Date Service Fee Total Mileage Charges Forwarding Fee Total Charges Advance Deposits Annount owed to U.S. Marshal* or (Amount of Refund*) Signature of U.S. Marshal* or (Amount of Refund*) Signature of U.S. Marshal* or (Amount of Refund*)	GEND MOTOR	OF GENTIAL GODIE	TO DEOLIE	TED LEN		DEGG DEV OW				8	
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- PRINT 5 COPIES: 1. CLERK OF THE COURT
 - 2. USMS RECORD
 - 3. NOTICE OF SERVICE
 - 4. BILLING STATEMENT*: To be returned to the U.S. Marshal with payment, if any amount is owed. Please remit promptly payable to U.S. Marshal.
 - 5. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

PRIOR EDITIONS MAY BE USED

Form USM-285 Rev. 12/15/80 Automated 01/00

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED	STATES	OF AMERICA,)	CIVIL	ACTION	NO.
)			
		Plaintiff,)	JUDGE		
		*)			
	v.)			
)			
\$15,439	9.00 IN	U.S. CURRENCY,)			
et al.,	•)			
)			
		Defendant.)	NOTICE	<u> </u>	
Party-	in-Inter	rest:				

Keith Green c/o Jane Timonere, Esq. 4 Lawyers Row Jefferson, Ohio 44047

The above-captioned forfeiture action was filed in U.S.

District Court on December 3, 2018. A copy of the complaint is attached. If you claim an interest in any of the defendant properties, the following applies.

Pursuant to Rule G of the Supplemental Rules for Admiralty or Maritime and Asset Forfeiture Claims, you are required to file with the Court, and serve upon Phillip J. Tripi, plaintiff's attorney, whose address is United States Attorney's Office; United States Court House; 801 West Superior Avenue, Suite 400; Cleveland, Ohio 44113, a verified claim to the defendant

properties within thirty-five (35) days after your receipt of the complaint. Said claim shall contain the information required by Rule G(5) of the said Supplemental Rules.

Additionally, you must file and serve an answer to the complaint or a motion under Rule 12 of the Civil Rules of Procedure, within twenty (20) days after the filing of the claim, exclusive of the date of filing. If you fail to do so, judgment by default will be taken for the relief demanded in the complaint.

Very truly yours,

Justin E. Herdman United States Attorney

Date: December 3, 2018 By:

Phillip J. Tripi

Assistant U.S. Attorney

Reg. No. 0017767

400 United States Court House

801 West Superior Avenue

Cleveland, Ohio 44113

(216) 622-3769

Fax: (216) 522-7499

Phillip.tripi@usdoj.gov